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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2008

In Today's Papers

Turkey to Ratify Kyoto Protocol
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Taraf, Cumhuriyet, Referans, Zaman and others report
Government Spokesman Cemil Cicek said the Turkish government has adopted, in principle, the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. Cicek said after the Council of Ministers' meeting on Monday, a proposal to ratify the Protocol would be submitted to the parliament's approval soon. "In the post-Kyoto agreement era, Turkey needs to participate in the process to voice its concerns," emphasized Cicek. Parliament's Environment Commission chairman Haluk Ozdalga said the proposal would be passed with support from all parties. "Turkey has no emission reduction obligations, and it will not be obliged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions until after 2012," Ozdalga stated. He added the Protocol falls under EU environmental legislation, and Turkey would face pressure from the EU to ratify it during membership negotiations.

FM Babacan Leaves for U.S.
Sabah, Star, Zaman, Aksam, Turkiye: Papers report that Foreign Minister Ali Babacan left for the U.S. on an official visit yesterday. Mainstream Sabah reports that Babacan will meet with Vice-President Cheney and Secretary Rice tomorrow. The AKP closure case will be on the agenda during his meeting with Secretary Rice, notes Sabah. Conservative-nationalist Turkiye and tabloid Aksam report that Babacan will meet with Secretary of Energy Bodman and Secretary of Treasury Paulson as well. Anatolian Agency reports that after completing his program in Washington DC, Babacan will proceed to New York to attend an international conference on AIDS on June 10th and 11th, and to Paris, France to attend an international conference on Afghanistan on June 12th.

Meanwhile, Islamist-oriented Zaman reports that U.S. State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack said on Monday at a press conference that Turkey's mediation between Syria and Israel was worthy of praise.

Turkiye reports that President Gul will travel to Japan tonight to

boost the economic relations between the two countries, together with State Ministers Kursad Tuzmen and Mehmet Simsek, as well as 100 businessmen. The paper notes that Gul will be the first Turkish President to visit Japan.

Former U.S. Officials Join Brookings-TUSIAD Conference in Istanbul

Milliyet, Radikal and Yeni Safak report former diplomats and experts including Senator Barack Obama's foreign policy advisor Philip Gordon, John McCain's advisor Richard Burt, former U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Mark Parris, and Brookings Institute chair Strobe Talbott participated in the Brookings Institute-TUSIAD conference held in Istanbul on "U.S. Presidential Elections and Its Effects on U.S.-Turkey Ties." Both Gordon and Burt said the AKP's closure would not end Turkey-U.S. ties, but it may jeopardize political and cultural relations. Gordon said Obama, as well as many Democrat lawmakers, supported a Congressional adoption of Armenian 'genocide' allegations. He warned Turks now to begin to think what to do if the bill is passed. Parris told the conference Turkey had significant interests in several regional matters. "No matter which candidate is elected the U.S. President, Turkey's importance will continue. Turkey is never neglected," said Parris.

Poll: AKP, CHP Losing Votes

Liberal Radikal reports on a public opinion survey commissioned by Credit Suisse and conducted by A&G Research Company which shows Turkey's ruling AKP has begun to lose support in recent months. The AKP had 54.2 percent of votes in January 2008, and the CHP 13.7. If elections were held today, the distribution of votes among political parties would be as follows: Undecided 29.3 percent, AKP 28.1, CHP 13.7, MHP 12.1, DTP 4.6, and DSP 2.2. After the "undecided" votes

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are distributed among parties, the percentages would be: AKP 39.7, CHP 19.4, MHP 17.1, DTP 6.5, and DSP 3.1. The poll was conducted May 24-25 with one-on-one interviews with 2,386 adults, including 1173 women, in 33 provinces across Turkey.

France Opens a Diplomatic Representation in Erbil

Sabah, Hurriyet, Zaman, Milliyet and others: Papers report that French Foreign Minister Kouchner attended the opening of the French Diplomatic Representation in Erbil town of northern Iraq. Kouchner met with KRG President Massoud Barzani and at a joint press conference, Kouchner said that France will increase relations with the Kurdish Administration and will support the Kirkuk referendum.

The Floating Guantanamo

All news outlets feature extensive coverage of The Guardian's story which claims U.S. naval ships are being used as floating prisons. Mainstream Milliyet carries the headline, "Decorated Prisons," and notes, "thousands of terror suspects have passed through secret interrogations on up to seventeen U.S. war ships." Mainstream Sabah writes, "Countless Numbers of Ghost Suspects Were Tortured In International Waters." Liberal Radikal carries the front page headline, "Bush Said This Type of Punishment Was Finished, But Now Ships Are Transformed Into Prisons." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet calls the ships, "America's Torture Ships." Leftist Taraf notes, "It's Not A Naval Ship, It's a Torture Center." In "The U.S.'s Floating Prisons," far right Ortadogu reports, "the USS Ashland warship was used by the CIA and FBI in an organized and systematic operation to capture suspects from Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia," and "close to 100 people have completely disappeared from these ships."

Shops Selling Ladies' Lingerie in Malatya Received Threat Letters

Sabah, Milliyet, Vatan, Cumhuriyet and others: Papers report that ladies' lingerie shops in Malatya received threat letters delivered under their shop doors. The letters warned the shop owners to remove the underwear from their windows because such displays were against the ethical principles in Turkey. The letters were signed by the "Sensitive Women of Malatya."

TV News:

CNN Turk

Domestic News

- Government Spokesman Cemil Cicek said the government prepared an 'emergency plan of action' to meet the water needs of 81 provinces, and that seven provinces in Turkey urgently need water.
- On June 5th, the Constitutional Court will address the CHP application to annul AKP-MHP sponsored headscarf reforms which were passed by parliament.
- Conscientious objector Halil Sevda has been sentenced to five-month in prison for making a call to "reject compulsory military service" in a press statement he read in support of the Israeli conscientious objectors during Israel's 2006 invasion of Lebanon.

International News

- International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors will travel to Syria this month to investigate allegations that a site bombed by Israel in September was a secret nuclear installation.
- President Ahmadinejad will arrive in Rome this week to participate in a UN FAO summit on the global food crisis. Pope Benedict XVI has cancelled previously scheduled meetings with world leaders who are attending the conference in order to avoid an encounter with the Iranian President.

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- In an interview with Germany's Der Spiegel magazine, Nobel-prizewinning Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk said soccer in Turkey serves nationalist and xenophobic thinking, but he would still support the country's team at the Euro 2008 soccer championship.

WILSON